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ABSTRACT

In January 1990, an Advisor Caseload Assignment System (ACAS) was implemented at the Homewood-Brushton Branch (HBB) of the Community College of Allegheny County (Pennsylvania) to ensure that admitted students were assigned an academic advisor with responsibility for assessing their academic needs, advising them, and monitoring their progress. Previously, advisors had performed the same functions, but their caseloads evolved informally and unsystematically, and as a result, some students received intensive advising while others received little or none. Between October 1990 and January 1991, a study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of ACAS. A confidential survey instrument was administered at registration to continuing students, who were predominantly African American and economically disadvantaged, soliciting information on students' use of and attitudes toward the advising system. Study findings, based on 93 responses out of HBB's 364 continuing students, included the following: (1) 54.8% of the respondents had first enrolled at HBB prior to ACAS's implementation; (2) 100% of the respondents who enrolled before or during January 1990 and 72% of those who enrolled in August 1990 reported having an assigned advisor; (3) overall, 86% of the students knew the name of their advisor; (4) those respondents with greater longevity at HBB met with advisors more often than those with less longevity; (5) only 10.8% of the respondents did not meet with their advisor at least once after January 1990; and (6) proper course selection was cited as students' most important advising need, followed by solving schedule problems, planning academic programs, setting academic goals, following college policies, and understanding college policies. A review of the literature, recommendations, information on the campus's academic advisors, and the survey instrument are included. (MAB)

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CONTINUING STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO ACADEMIC ADVISING FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ADVISOR CASELOAD ASSIGNMENT SYSTEM AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, HOMEWOOD-BRUSHTON BRANCH

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PURPOSE

This survey attempted to determine the effectiveness[1] of the CCAC, Homewood-Brushton Branch Advisor Caseload Assignment System.

RATIONALE

In the 1989 Fall Semester the CCAC Homewood-Brushton Branch (HBB) academic advisors designed and proposed adoption of an advisor caseload assignment system. With administrative approval, the system was implemented in January, 1990. It was intended to assure that each student admitted and/or registered before and after the 1990 Spring Semester would be assigned to an academic advisor. Each advisor would assume primary responsibility for academic needs assessment, advisement and monitoring the progress of assigned students throughout their enrollment at the Branch.

Prior to 1990, HBB advisors had performed the broad functions identified above with great numbers of students. As a result, caseloads evolved informally and unsystematically. Meanwhile, anecdotal data revealed that some students received intensive advisement while others received little or none. It was hoped that instituting an organized

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[1]In this paper, the phrase "determine the effectiveness of the advising system" is equivalent to "determine how well the advising system is working."

case assignment[1] system would provide effective and equitable utilization of the advisement process by the total student population.

The written "Advisor Caseload Assignment System Proposal" (Poole, 1989) specified responsibilities of academic advisors as well as support clerical personnel. Evaluation of case assignment advising was identified as a responsibility of the academic advisors. This survey was the initial effort made to fulfill that responsibility.

In his book, *Academic Advising Audit*, Crockett (1988) described seven advising delivery models. They were as follows: Faculty-Only Model; Supplementary Advising Model; Split Advising Model; Dual Advising Model; Total Intake Model; Satellite Model; and Self-Contained Model. He also discussed possible staffing patterns for each model indicating that advisor staffing would vary according to conditions prescribed by the specific models. He recommended that each institution select or design a model appropriate to its needs and resources. In every situation, he advocated determining a rational method for assigning students to advisors within the delivery model selected (pp. 20-44).

The Self-Contained Model was defined by Crockett (1988) as one in which all academic advising from orientation through departure from the institution takes place in a centralized unit. Academic advising at HBB resembles the Self-Contained Model in that it occurs in a centralized student services office. Also, since implementation of case assignment, academic advising has usually been provided to each credit student by an assigned advisor throughout enrollment until departure from the Branch to the Main

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[1]Caseload Assignment and case assignment are used interchangeably in this document.

Campus or to another higher education institution. When assigning a student to an advisor, the attempt has been made to match the student's interests and career goals with the advisors's areas of expertise thereby maximizing the probability for a successful advising process.

Advisor staffing at HBB does not conform to any of the staffing patterns outlined in Crockett (1988). However, he did indicate that not conforming to traditional staffing patterns was a sound practice. He stated, "What works well at one institution may not work well at another; each institution should select the combination of people most appropriate for its situation and student body" (p. 27).

When this survey was conducted, academic advising at HBB was provided by six professional staff with diverse educational and experiential backgrounds. Each advisor had no less than four years experience advising students and teaching in their professional disciplines in a college setting. Included among those disciplines were anesthesiology, counseling, education, history, nursing, philosophy, psychology, sociology, social work and theology. Five of the advisors were functioning concurrently or had previously functioned in supervisory and/or administrative capacities. Two of the academic advisors were male; four were female. All six were African American.

With few exceptions, academic advising at HBB has been provided from 10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M., Monday through Friday every week during each semester. Coverage for those hours has been provided by advisors scheduling, posting and keeping consistent hours for meeting with advisees. An expectation of the case assignment system has been that advisees make appointments to meet with their advisors at certain times or intervals

throughout the semester. 'Walk-ins' have also been accommodated whenever possible. Academic advising has also occurred on Saturday mornings between 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 noon, however, other student services such as Placement Testing have usually taken precedence during that time period. Since the backgrounds and working hours of HBB advising staff differ from the norm, pertinent information about each academic advisor is reported in Appendix A.

Because of alternate hours, seldom have all six HBB academic advisors been at work in the student services office at the same time. Therefore, opportunities for sharing information and observations about the advising system and for developing a sense of cohesiveness have been limited to periodic meetings with the dean and director of the Branch. Although productive, such meetings could not be used as vehicles for systematic evaluation of the advising program.

As early as the late 1960s and early 1970s, some writers in the literature of higher education asserted that counseling and guidance [advising] programs should be based on sound evaluation (McConnell, 1967; Oliver, 1975). Dworkin and Waltz (1971) observed that instead of systematic evaluation "guidance personnel have tended to . . . use insight, revelation, trial by error or some other 'fly by the seat of your pants' method" (p. 308). More recently in his comprehensive discussion of academic advising, Crockett (1988) emphasized that higher education institutions should regularly evaluate the overall effectiveness of their advising programs. He further stipulated that a well designed evaluation program should "determine how well the advising system is working" (p. 19). That was the primary aim of this survey.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

To determine the effectiveness of the HBB Advisor Caseload Assignment System, during its first year of operation, a survey instrument was designed to elicit data which were intended to answer the following questions:

1. Will the fact that continuing (credit) students enrolled during different time periods influence their perceptions of the advising process?

2. Will continuing students have assigned advisors during the period surveyed?

3. Will continuing students who have assigned advisors know their advisor's names?

4. Will the length of time continuing students have assigned advisors during the period surveyed influence their attitudes about advising received?

5. With what frequency will continuing students meet with their advisors during the period surveyed?

6. Will advising needs of continuing students be met through meetings between them and their advisors during the period surveyed?

7. What attitudes will continuing students' general comments convey regarding advising received during the period surveyed?

METHOD

Instrument

The HBB academic advisors developed a Student Advising Questionnaire (Appendix B) which was designed to elicit continuing students' responses to academic advising received at HBB after implementation of the advisor case assignment system. (Continuing Student was defined as one enrolled in credit classes no later than August,

1990). The questionnaire which consisted of seven (7) Items was intended to provide information relevant to the evaluation questions.

Items 1, 2, 4 and 5, respectively, sought the following information: 1) when respondent became a student at HBB; 2) if student had an assigned advisor; 4) length of time assigned to that advisor; and 5) number of times seen by the advisor since January, 1990. Those items required that respondents provide quantitative data by checking the one correct response from among those listed. Item #3 requested that each respondent write in his/her advisor's name. This question was introduced to determine if each student who had an assigned advisor also knew that advisor's name.

Item #6 listed 12 advisee needs which are expected to be met by advisors as specified in the "Advisor Caseload Assignment System Proposal" (pp. 2-4). It also included additional needs which emerged during implementation of the system. The item requested that respondents check each need met from among the 12 listed. It was designed to elicit qualitative data regarding help students felt they received from advising provided following implementation of the case assignment program. An 'other' category was also included in the advising list. This offered respondents an opportunity to specify additional types of advising received which they considered helpful. Item 7 invited general comments, and also was intended to provide qualitative data.

Procedure

Survey data were collected between October 22, 1990 and January 15, 1991. During that period, HBB academic advisors and two student services clerical staff administered the Student Advising Questionnaire. When a continuing student arrived at

the Student Services Office to register for the 1991 Spring semester either an advisor or clerical staff member was expected to ask the student to complete the advising questionnaire. Its purpose and directions were printed on the questionnaire. Therefore, verbal explanations were not given. The student was requested to read and complete the questionnaire to the best of his/her ability. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, students were directed to place completed questionnaires in a receptacle located in a designated area of the Student Services Office.

Population

The Homewood-Brushton Branch of the Allegheny Campus, CCAC is the largest of the College's off Campus sites. It is located in the heart of the business district of Homewood-Brushton, a community which is largely African American and economically depressed.

The HBB student body tends to mirror the racial composition and socio-economic status of the surrounding community. Therefore, the student population is predominantly African American and economically disadvantaged. A majority of the student body is also part-time, over 21 years of age and female. It is therefore reasonable to infer that most survey respondents were demographically similar to the total student body.

A wide variety of non-credit programs are offered at HBB, however, students in those programs were not included in the survey. Only continuing students enrolled in developmental and college-level credit courses qualified for participation.

At the beginning of the 1990 Fall semester a total of 495 full- and part-time credit students were enrolled at the Branch.[1] A thorough review of the credit student files by this writer revealed that only 364 were continuing students. It was from that population that the survey respondents were derived.

Respondents

This survey was not designed to result in a scientific study. Instead, it was intended to elicit sufficient data from continuing students which could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the early phase of the Advisor Caseload Assignment System. Utilizing student advisees for that purpose was supported by Crockett (1988). He wrote, "Although all contribute to the evaluation process, advisee evaluation is probably the most direct and useful since the advisees are the recipients of the service" (p. 29).

This writer who performed the role of coordinator for the survey retrieved a total of 95 completed Student Advising Questionnaires from the designated receptacle. As planned, she collected the questionnaires on January 15, 1991, one day prior to the beginning of the 1991 Spring semester. Two questionnaires did not meet the continuing student criterion and were excluded. Thus, the final number of respondents was 93. Based upon the total of 364 continuing students and the return of 93 usable questionnaires, the percentage return was calculated as 25.6%.

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[1]These data were extracted from the *Credit Statistical Report*, Homewood Brushton Branch, Fall, 1990.

Treatment of the Data

Responses from the 93 questionnaires were tabulated and/or summarized. Tabulations of responses of the total survey population to Item 1 were converted to percentages and reported in Table 1. Responses to Items 2-3 and 5-7 by the total survey population and by each sub-enrollment survey population (those respondents who first enrolled before January, 1990, in January, 1990 or August, 1990) were each tabulated and converted to percentages. Improper construction of survey questionnaire Item 4 invalidated that data. The responses of respondents enrolled in January 1990 and August 1990 were combined, tabulated and converted to percentages. It was done so that appropriate comparisons could be made between the sub-enrollment survey populations enrolled before and after case assignment was implemented. These data were reported in Tables2 through 6.

RESULTS

Presentation of Data, Analyses and Discussion of Findings

Presented in this section are tables indicating responses to items on the survey instrument as they relate to the total survey population including each sub-enrollment survey population. Prior to each Table, analysis and discussion of its findings will be presented.

Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 1

The responses to Item 1 as reported in Table 1 below were useful primarily as a basis for analyses of subsequent survey items. However, it is interesting to note that the findings revealed that more than one-half (54.8%) of the survey respondents had enrolled

at HBB before 1990, prior to implementation of the Case Assignment System. Although unexpected, the finding was probably due to the fact that because those students had greater longevity at the Branch and were better acquainted with advising services, they were more willing than their newer survey counterparts (enrolled January, 1990, 18.3% or August, 1990, 26.9%) to reveal their attitudes about advising in written form. The fact that Item 1 data revealed that greater than 50% of the respondents enrolled before Case Assignment began, necessitated factoring the finding into subsequent data analyses.

Table 1. Number and Percent of Total Survey Populations' Responses to Item 1 of the Student Advising Questionnaire (N=93)

Item (1)	# of Responses	% of Responses
I became a student at HBB:		
Before January 1990	51	54.8
In January 1990	17	18.3
In August 1990	25	26.9

Analysis and Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 2

The responses to Item 2 (I Have an Assigned Advisor) revealed high percentages in the "Yes" category for the three sub-enrollment populations (before January, 1990 [100%]; in January 1990 [100%]; and August 1990 [72%]). The lowest percentage response of 72% might be related to the fact that respondents enrolled in August 1990 were at the Branch only 2-4 months at the time of the survey. That possibility, notwithstanding, when the January, 1990 and August, 1990 enrollee responses were combined, the percentage in the "Yes" category increased to 83.3%. Although lower, that figure compared favorably with the 100% response of the respondent group enrolled

before 1990. No major response difference[1] was shown between those enrolled before and after implementation of case assignment system. When examined in the aggregate, the total survey populations' response was 92.5%.

Table 2. Number and Percent of Responses to Item 2 of the Student Advising Questionnaire

Respondents	Responses					
Item: I have an Assigned Advisor	Yes		No		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Survey Population (N=93)	86	92.5	3	3.2	4	4.3
Enrolled Before January 1990 (N=51)	51	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Enrolled in January 1990 (N=17)	17	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Enrolled in August 1990 (N=25)	18	72.0	3	12.0	4	16.0
Enrolled in January and August, 1990 Combined (N=42)	35	83.3	3	7.2	4	9.5

The above findings were considered very positive because they produced concrete evidence that students were being assigned to advisors as required by the Case Assignment System. That fact would lead to an inference that case assignment experienced a high level of success during the period surveyed.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 3

Item 3 was included in the survey to determine if in addition to having assigned advisors, respondents could also name their advisors. The percentage levels in each

[1]Major response difference was considered 25 percentage points in either direction.

enrollment population were somewhat lower than those presented in Table 2 which had produced evidence that a majority of respondents had assigned advisors, however, they did compare favorably. The same pattern of responses prevailed as in Table 2 with the respondents who enrolled before January, 1990 registering the highest percentage and those enrolled in August, 1990 registering the lowest. Although the combined January 1990 and August 1990 group responses were lower than the before January 1990 group, the response difference was not considered major. These findings reinforced the impression that case assignment had experienced some degree of success at HBB.

Table 3. Number and Percent of Responses to Item 3 of the Student Advising Questionnaire

Respondents	Named Advisor		No Response	
Item 3: My Advisor's Name is	#	%	#	%
Total Survey Population (N=93)	80	86.0	13	14.0
Enrolled Before January 1990 (N=51)	49	96.1	2	3.9
Enrolled in January 1990 (N=17)	15	88.2	2	11.8
Enrolled in August, 1990 (N=25)	16	64.0	9	36.0
Enrolled in January and August, 1990 Combined (N=42)	31	73.9	11	26.2

Analysis and Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 4

The findings reported in Table 4 revealed that a majority of respondents in all sub-enrollment populations met with their advisors a minimum of one time after case assignment was initiated. The pattern which emerged in Item 2 and 3 findings, was also evident among the Item 5 finding. Those respondents with greater longevity at HBB met with advisors more often than those who were newer to the Branch. However, the

combined responses for the January and August 1990 respondents who enrolled after case assignment began did not differ in a major way from those of respondents who enrolled before January 1990, prior to case assignment.

Table 4. Number and Percent of Responses to Item 5 of the Student Advising Questionnaire

Respondents	Responses									
Item 5: Since January, 1990 Met with my Advisor	0 Times		1-2 Times		3-4 Times		More Than 4 Times		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Survey Population (N=93)	10	10.8	46	49.5	17	18.3	13	14.0	7	7.4
Enrolled before Jan., 1990 (N=51)	3	5.9	26	51.0	11	21.6	9	17.6	2	3.9
Enrolled in Jan., 1990 (N=17)	3	17.6	9	53.0	3	17.6	1	5.9	1	5.9
Enrolled in Aug., 1990 (N=25)	4	16.0	11	44.0	3	12.0	3	12.0	4	9.5
Enrolled in Jan., and Aug., 1990 Combined (N=42)	7	16.7	20	47.6	6	14.3	4	9.5	5	11.9

A positive trend was detected among the findings which revealed that approximately one-third of the total survey population met with advisors 3 or more times during the period surveyed. Crockett (1988) contended that "good advising includes frequency of contact which strengthens the quality of the advisor/advisee relationship" (p. 25). It was gratifying to discover that a respectable number of survey respondents met with advisors on a frequent basis.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 5

Whereas Items 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the Student Advising Questionnaire provided quantitative data, the responses to Item 6 were especially important to the survey because they provided qualitative data which conveyed students' subjective perceptions about their experiences within the advising process. The data presented in Table 5 indicated that

100% of the total survey population was helped in some manner by advising provided at HBB. This overall positive response might have been due to the fact that the respondents felt enhanced by experiencing opportunities to communicate, share and discuss their academic interest and career goals with interested, concerned, qualified advisors. Crockett (1988) pointed out that advisees respond more positively if academic advisors are interested and concerned.

Although percentage responses for most advisee needs included under Item 6 varied somewhat within each enrollment sub-population, one need--to select proper course schedules--was relatively high in every enrollment population (before January, 1990 [84.3%]; in January, 1990 [70.6%]; in August, 1990 [60%]; in January and August 1990 combined [64.3%] and total survey population [75%]). Selection of proper course schedules is considered the most important advisee need in a college setting (Crockett, 1988).

Those advisee needs which received the next highest percentage responses (between 44.1% to 49.5%) in descending order were to: solve course schedule problems; plan academic programs; set academic goals; follow college policies and understand college policies. That finding indicated that advising received helped respondents mainly in areas which relate to common or usual advising concerns.

Other needs which received modest overall percentage responses (21.5% to 34.4%) in descending order were to: complete course substitute requests; be aware of support services; be less anxious about coursework; pursue financial/scholarship aid; and use Pert Chart. Two of those, be aware of support services and pursue financial aid, were

Table 5. Number and Percent of Responses to Item 6 of the Student Advising Questionnaire

Item	Responses									
Since January 1990 advising helped me to:	Total Survey Population		Enrolled Before January 1990 (N=51)		Enrolled in January 1990 (N=17)		Enrolled in August 1990 (N=25)		Enrolled in January, 1990 & August 1990 Combined (N=42)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
a. Understand college policies	41	44.1	29	56.9	7	41.2	5	20.0	12	28.6
b. Follow college procedure	44	47.3	30	58.8	7	41.2	7	28.0	14	33.3
c. Select proper course schedule	70	75.3	43	84.3	12	70.6	15	60.0	27	64.3
d. Solve course schedule problems	44	47.3	27	52.9	9	52.9	8	32.0	17	40.8
e. Complete course substitute request	32	34.4	23	45.1	5	29.4	4	16.0	9	21.4
f. Set clear academic goals	41	44.1	32	62.7	12	70.6	7	28.0	19	45.2
g. Plan academic program	46	49.5	34	66.7	11	64.7	11	44.0	22	52.4
h. Use Pert Chart	20	21.5	17	33.3	2	11.8	3	12.0	5	11.9
i. Be less anxious about coursework	25	26.9	18	35.3	3	17.6	4	16.0	7	16.7
j. Complete graduation forms	6	6.5	4	7.8	1	5.9	1	4.0	2	4.8
k. Be aware of support service	31	33.3	20	39.2	5	29.4	6	24.0	11	26.2
l. Pursue financial/scholarship aid	22	23.7	12	23.5	5	29.4	5	20.0	10	23.8
m. Other	7	7.5	4	7.8	2	11.8	1	4.0	3	7.1

met by well established staff members with whom students conferred often without referral from advisors,therefore the percentage response would not likely be high. Course substitute requests were not needed by all students and were almost always made near the end of registration periods. A Tentative Academic Plan of Action which students like was used as an adjunct to the Pert Chart. Those reasons could account for the modest percentage responses received by those two advisee needs.

The 'other' category as well as the complete graduation form need received low total percentage responses (7.5% and 6.5% respectively). Few students complete degree requirements at the Branch, therefore it would be expected that the complete graduation form need would receive a low response. The 'other' category also ranked low probably because the advisee needs list in the questionnaire was extensive. Perhaps one of the most illuminating findings from this item was the fact that the total survey population percentage response (26.9%) for the need to be less anxious about coursework was higher than might be expected. Although meeting that need is usually considered a personal counseling rather than an academic advising function, its higher than expected percentage response might be attributed to the fact that HBB academic advisors consider helping students reduce anxiety and develop self-confidence to be a major responsibility. Another important factor could be that the HBB academic advisors are African American and might be viewed as positive role models by the predominantly African American respondents in this survey. As was the pattern with previous items, recently enrolled respondents gave lower percentage responses for this item than those who enrolled earlier. When the January and August 1990 enrollee responses were

combined, their total percentage response did not differ in a major way from that of those enrolled before January 1990.

Finally, overall findings related to Item 5 suggested that a majority of respondents felt they were helped in some manner by advising during the period surveyed. That finding would infer effectiveness. However, the lower percentage responses to some advisee needs indicated that improvements are required in this area.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings Reported in Table 6

Twenty-four or 25.8% of the total survey population wrote specific comments on their questionnaires. Those comments were summarized, categorized, tabulated and converted to percentages for each enrollment sub-population. Twenty-one or 22.5% of the total survey population wrote positive comments such as: good, helpful, supportive advisors, administrators, faculty and staff at HBB. The remaining three or 3.3% wrote comments that showed lack of knowledge about the advising system or in the case of one respondent, expressed dissatisfaction with limited course offerings at the Branch.

Combined responses for the January 1990 and August 1990 enrollment sub-population did not differ in a major way from those of the respondents enrolled before January, 1990 prior to the beginning of case assignment. For the most part, the comments indicated that respondents in all enrollment populations were satisfied with the academic advising and other services received at Homewood-Brushton Branch.

SUMMARY

In January, 1990, an Academic Caseload Assignment System was implemented at the CCAC, Homewood-Brushton Branch. In past years, non-assigned advising had

Table 6. Number and Percent of Responses to Item 7 of the Student Advising Questionnaire

Item	Responses									
Comments (Summary)	Total Survey Population (N=93)		Enrolled Before January 1990 (N=51)		Enrolled in January 1990 (N=17)		Enrolled in August 1990 (N=25)		Enrolled in January, 1990 & August 1990 Combined (N=42)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Good, helpful supportive advisors	14	15.1	8	15.7	3	17.7	3	8.3	6	14.3
Very satisfied with HBB and its staff	4	4.3	2	3.9	1	5.8	1	4.0	2	4.7
HBB Dean is very understanding	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	5.8	0	0.0	1	2.4
Instructors are fantastic	1	1.1	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Advisors referred me to VIP	1	1.1	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I never made effort to see advisor until now	1	1.1	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I would like to know who my advisor is	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	4.0	1	2.4
Not enough courses at the campus	1	1.1	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

occurred regularly at the Branch. However, the newly implemented system required that full- and part-time credit (continuing) students be assigned to advisors who would be primarily responsible for meeting the advising needs of their students throughout their enrollment at the Branch.

For the purpose of determining the effectiveness of the Caseload Assignment System's first year of operation, a survey instrument called the Student Advising Questionnaire was developed. It consisted of seven (7) Items which were intended to elicit data regarding students' experiences with advising following implementation of the new system. The instrument was administered between October 22, 1990 and January 15, 1991 to continuing credit students who had enrolled at HBB no later than August, 1990. No other criteria were imposed.

Ninety-three (93) usable questionnaires were recovered on January 15, 1991 before the Spring semester began. That number represented 25.6% of the Fall 1990 credit student population. Data from the instruments were compiled, tabulated, and converted to percentages for the total survey population and four enrollment sub-populations. The results were reported in Tables 1-6. Prior to each Table, analysis and discussion of its findings were presented.

CONCLUSIONS

This survey did not pretend to be purely scientific, nor to generalize its findings to the total continuing student population of the Community College of Allegheny County. As was stated at the outset, the survey attempted to determine the effectiveness

of the Advisor Caseload Assignment System in its first year of operation at the CCAC, Homewood-Brushton Branch.

Although the total survey population was only 25.6% of the credit student population at HBB, it was concluded that the Advisor Caseload Assignment System was effective with respect to the total population surveyed as a result of the following outcomes:

1. A very large majority had assigned advisors after implementation of the Advisor Caseload Assignment System.

2. A very large majority demonstrated that they knew the names of their advisors.

3. A majority met with their advisors a minimum of one time after implementation of case assignment advising; additionally, approximately one-third met with their advisors on a more frequent basis. Despite the finding, ways of increasing frequency of advisor/advisee contacts should be explored.

4. One-hundred percent of the respondents indicated they were helped in some manner by advising provided during the survey period. Also the advisee needs that received the highest percentage responses were those which relate to usual or common advising concerns. However, greater attention should be paid to those advisee needs which received lower percentage responses.

5. Although limited in number, those general comments made by respondents decisively indicated that they were satisfied with academic advising and other services provided at the Homewood-Brushton Branch.

It was reported in this document that 54.8% of the survey respondents had enrolled at HBB prior to implementation of the Advisor Case Assignment System. Concern about the size of that enrollment sub-population prompted comparisons of the findings it

produced and the combined findings of the two groups enrolled after implementation of case advising. It was concluded from those comparisons that no major response differences existed between those enrolled before and after implementation of the new advising system.

Finally, it was concluded that although the survey results could not be generalized, students on the campuses of the Community College of Allegheny County and other types of higher education institutions are exposed to advising programs therefore, the survey may also be suggestive for those students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the survey results were generally positive indicating that the Advisor Case Assignment System had been effective during the period surveyed, the fact that a relatively small percentage of students participated in the survey and some advisee needs were not met as often as desired, areas for improvement became evident. Therefore, the following recommendations for improvements in the Homewood-Brushton Branch Advising Program and for future advising program evaluation were generated:

1. To engage as many students as possible in the advising process, it is recommended that all credit students be notified that they must have assigned advisors.

2. To further assure that as many students as possible participate in the advising process, it is recommended that they be required to contact their advisors on specific occasions such as: registration/class scheduling; periods when declaring or changing a major; following a period of extensive absenteeism or a report of unsatisfactory progress, (Crockett, 1988).

3. To insure that students are seen on a regular basis, advisors should become more assertive and contact advisees to discuss matters of common concern. Crockett (1988) advocates that advising be "intrusive" and when necessary "force" contact between advisee and advisor (p. 25).

4. To provide more comprehensive services to students, academic advisors could devote more attention to such important advisee needs as: set clear academic goals, plan academic programs and understand college policies.

5. It is recommended that this survey be replicated in another setting which would include students of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. The results of such a survey could more readily be generalized to broader segments of higher education students than the present survey which included primarily African Americans.

6. Finally, to follow up this survey, it is recommended that an experienced researcher design a scientific study to evaluate the various aspects of the Homewood-Brushton Branch's advising system. Such a study could contribute to the need for information pertaining to the impact of academic advising upon retention rate and academic achievement of HBB students and possibly to that of college students as a whole.

ADDENDUM

Dr. Mack Kingsmore, President of Community College of Allegheny County, at the All College Planning Day held January 11, 1991, remarked that a recent Institutional Perceptions Inventory revealed that faculty, administrators and support staff were consistent in ranking "effective advising" as one of their top four concerns (Holmberg, 1991).

Hopefully, this survey will contribute to the College's movement toward more effective academic advising.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

PERTINENT INFORMATION CONCERNING ACADEMIC ADVISORS OF HOMEWOOD-BRUSHTON BRANCH, ALLEGHENY CAMPUS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Herron, Adele Johns

REGISTERED NURSE; CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETIST; EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST
DIPLOMA; ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING
GRADUATE; MONTEFIORE HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF ANESTHESIOLOGY
B.S., EDUCATION, CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY
M.S., UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Curriculum Development, Health Related Professions

Homewood-Brushton Branch part-time academic advisor, three (3) hours, two (2) evenings per week. May teach allied health course at HBB if needed. Full-time Associate Professor, Allied Health Department, Allegheny Campus; former part-time Academic Advisor and Liaison for Health Programs with Pittsburgh Public Schools, Allegheny Campus, 1986-1988.

Hollis, Neddie C.

LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER; PENNSYLVANIA
THE ACADEMY OF CERTIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS
B.S., EDUCATION/SOCIAL STUDIES, CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY
M.S.W., WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
MAJOR: Social Work Supervision/Administration

Homewood-Brushton Branch part-time academic advisor, three (3) hours advising one evening a week and three (3) hours placement testing Saturdays (9:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon). Teaches sociology course each semester at HBB; advisor to HBB Sociology Club. Executive Director, Sickle Cell Society, Inc.

Horton, Lugenia M.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST
B.S., PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
M.A., EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Educational Testing and Measurement Counseling
PH.D., HIGHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Adult Education and Administration

Homewood-Brushton Branch full-time Special Projects Coordinator (and teacher) Vocational Improvement and Pre-College Programs. May teach one or more psychology courses a semester at HBB if needed. Advisor to HBB Student Leadership Advocacy Club; part-time academic advisor HBB three (3) hours, two (2) afternoons weekly if demands of other roles permit.

Meekins, William B.

ORDAINED MINISTER, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
B.A., (STORER COLLEGE); VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY
MAJOR: Sociology/History
M.ED., UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Counseling
ATTENDED INTERDENOMINATION THEOLOGY CENTER, ATLANTA, GA

Homewood-Brushton Branch full-time academic counselor. Responsible for coordinating student services: advising, placement and career testing, and student orientation. Teaches a philosophy course at HBB if needed. Academic advising between hours of 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday (varies widely depending upon demands of other roles.

Oakley, Harriett P.

REGISTERED NURSE, CLINICAL SPECIALIST, PULMONARY NURSING
A.S. NURSING, COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALLEGHENY COUNTY,
ALLEGHENY CAMPUS
B.S.N., NURSING, DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
M.ED., EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Vocational Education, Health
M.S.N. NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Pulmonary Clinical Specialty
Homewood-Brushton Branch part-time academic advisor, three (3) hours, one (1) evening weekly; full-time Professor/Academic Advisor, Nursing Program, Allegheny Campus.

Poole, Rachel Johnson

REGISTERED NURSE, CLINICAL SPECIALIST, PSYCHIATRIC NURSING
B.S., NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
M.LITT. NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Psychiatric Nursing, Education, Administration
PH.D., COUNSELOR EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
MAJOR: Personal Counseling
MINOR: Higher Education Administration

Homewood-Brushton Branch part-time academic advisor, six (6) hours, one (1) afternoon/evening weekly and four (4) hours, one (1) afternoon weekly. Conducts personal growth seminars for credit and non-credit students. Retired Assistant Academic Dean of Life Sciences (Biology and Nursing) Allegheny Campus.

Appendix B

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY
HOMEWOOD-BRUSHTON BRANCH
STUDENT ADVISING QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is attempting to determine the effectiveness of the Homewood-Brushton Branch (HBB) advising system. Please respond to each statement as instructed. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

1. I became a student at HBB (Check One)
   ___ In January 1990
   ___ In August 1990
   ___ Before January 1990

2. I have an assigned advisor (Check One) ___ Yes ___ No

3. My advisors name is (Write his/her name on the line) _____

4. He/she has been my advisor for (Check One)
   ___ 1 - 6 Months
   ___ 6 Months - 1 Year
   ___ 1 - 2 Years
   ___ More than 2 Years

5. Since January 1990, I have met with my advisor (Check One)
   ___ 0 Times
   ___ 1 - 2 Times
   ___ 3 - 4 Times
   ___ More than 4 Times

6. Since January 1990, the advising provided has helped me (Check each appropriate response)
   __ To understand college policies
   __ To plan academic program
   __ To follow college procedures, i.e., Change of Major
   __ To use Pert Chart
   __ To select proper course schedule
   __ To be less anxious about coursework
   __ To solve course schedule problems
   __ To complete graduation form
   __ To complete course substitute requests
   __ To be aware of support services, i.e., VIP, Learning Lab, tutoring
   __ To set clear academic goals
   __ To pursue financial/scholarship aid

__ Other (Please Specify) _____

_____

_____

_____

7. COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Dworken, E. P., & Waltz, G. R. (1971). An evaluation model for guidance. In D. R. Cook (Ed.), *Guidance for education in revolution* (pp. 306-344). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

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McConnell, T. R. (1967). *Project for appraisal and development of junior college student personnel programs.* Washington, DC: American Association of Junior Colleges.

Oliver, L. W. (1975). Counselling implication of recent research on women. *Personal and Guidance Journal*, 53. 430-437.

Poole, R. J. (1989). *Advisor caseload assignment system proposal.* (Unpublished paper) Community College of Allegheny County, Allegheny Campus, Homewood-Brushton Branch.